

Fort Carson reviews sustainability challenges

by **Hal Alguire**

*Directorate of Environmental
Compliance and Management*

In the next few months, the garrison leadership will sit down to review the progress made in the Sustainability and Environmental Management System — a management system that provides a framework for environmental performance on Fort Carson.

With the development of the 25-year sustainability goals in 2002, Fort Carson leadership decided to combine Sustainability with the EMS to create a SEMS. This approach is unique to Fort Carson, but others are seeing the value in it. Just recently Region 8 of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency headquarters in Denver started a SEMS.

The SEMS review provides Fort Carson leadership with the opportunity to maintain commitment toward sustainability by aligning resources against Fort Carson sustainability goals and to measure progress made to date. Measuring progress can be easy if a few basic ideas are followed. Relevant objectives, those that directly support a particular long-range goal, must first be in place. These objectives should be specific enough so that they can be measurable, simple and easy to understand, realistic and attainable, and allow for clear line of accountability.

Without a way to measure progress with a target to shoot for, it is difficult to show progress. People use measurements and targets in everyday life as they work to achieve certain goals. Losing a certain amount of weight is common to many. For many to be successful, a weight target is established and progress is measured by regular weigh-ins where the weight (in pounds) is measured and compared against a target. Another common example involves paying off a mortgage, car loan or other financial debt. People measure progress by monthly payments and have a target date to have the loan completely paid off. Again, progress can be seen as measured against a target.

In a very similar fashion, Fort Carson long-term sustainability goals need targets and a straightforward way to measure progress against those targets. Organizations and individuals on Fort Carson can develop supporting measures and targets in their own workplaces to show progress made against the Fort Carson goals.

All 12 sustainability goals proponents are developing measurements in order to better track goal attainment against clearly defined targets. In this way, Fort Carson leaders can better assess progress and align resources where required in order to achieve the long-term sustainability goals.

Fort Carson Sustainability Goals

1. Sustain all facility and mobility systems from renewable sources, and reduce the total water purchased from outside sources by 75 percent.
2. Reduce automobile dependency and provide balanced land use and transportation systems.
3. Improve communication to foster understanding and attain a "Community of One."
4. Enhance partnering to collaboratively develop, integrate, and implement regional sustainability.
5. The total weight of hazardous air pollutant emissions is reduced to zero.
6. Further integrate sustainability principles into the Fort Carson land use planning, real property master planning, and military construction, Army programming processes.
7. All applicable facilities at Fort Carson will be high performance buildings that meet or surpass the platinum standard of the Sustainable Project Rating Tool or the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design.
8. Key stakeholder groups are trained, compliant and motivated toward sustainability principles.
9. All Department of Defense and Fort Carson procurement actions support sustainability.
10. The total weight of solid and hazardous waste disposed of is reduced to zero.
11. Training Ranges (land and associated air space used for live fire ranges, maneuver, testing and urban development designated for Military Operations in Urban Terrain training) capable of supporting current and future military training to standard.
12. Advance a sustainable mission and Fort Carson by adopting a SEMS and by imparting a personal commitment and enthusiasm for sustainability.